



THE ANISHINAABEK IN MICHIGAN

Who Are the Three Fires?

People have lived in Michigan for longer than anyone can remember. Before the French and British came here in the 1600s and 1700s, Michigan was home to several tribes. Michigan's three largest tribes are the Ojibwe (also called Chippewa), the Odawa (also called Ottawa) and the Potawatomi (also called the Bode'wadmi). They share common language, customs and beliefs. Together, they are Anishinaabe, or "original people." Hundreds of years ago, they created a partnership called the Three Fires.

Ojibwe (Chippewa)

Ojibwe are the "keepers of the ceremonies and song" in the Three Fires.

Odawa

Odawa are the "keepers of the trade" in the Three Fires.

Potawatomi (Bode'wadmi)

Potawatomi are the "keepers of the fire" in the three Fires.

The Anishinaabek often lived in villages of **dome-shaped houses** called **wigwams**. Everyone that lived in the village worked together. In warmer months, people hunted and fished, built birch bark canoes, wove fishing nets and planted and harvested crops. In colder months, people moved around to find the resources they needed. They hunted and fished as well as trapped animals. They also harvested maple syrup and prepared for spring planting season.

Today, people of the Three Fires continue to share common language, customs, and beliefs. Many of the same hunting, fishing, farming, and harvesting traditions remain important to their way of life.

